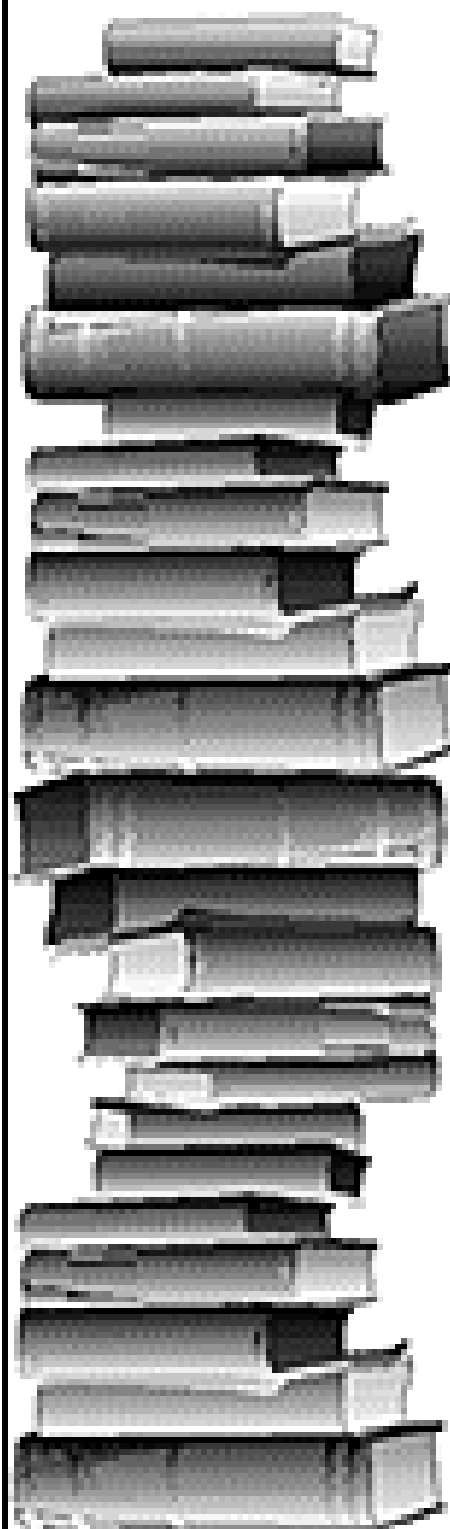


Office for Victims of Crime

OVC

*Advocating for the Fair
Treatment of Crime Victims*



Office for Victims of Crime Publication Guide

October 1999

**U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs**

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<p>The Office for Victims of Crime is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.</p>

Foreword

The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) is the Federal office responsible for meeting the needs and protecting the rights of our Nation's crime victims. OVC accomplishes this by funding training and providing technical assistance for victim service providers and criminal justice professionals. OVC publishes instructional products to help victim advocates effectively serve crime victims and to provide information to victims so that they may recover.

These guidelines are designed to help you—the OVC grantee or contractor—to produce your OVC publication in such a way that OVC staff can work more effectively with you to develop a quality product. Please forward comments and suggestions to the Publication Unit at OVC at the following address:

Office for Victims of Crime
810 Seventh Street, NW
Washington, DC 20531

OVC welcomes this opportunity to work with you in developing dynamic and useful publications that will both inspire and instruct the victim rights community.

Kathryn M. Turman
Director
Office for Victims of Crime

Introduction

This *OVC Publication Guide* describes the criteria grantees must follow when preparing publications for submission to the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), including—

- # Word processing and formatting guidelines.
- # Types of materials OVC publishes.
- # The *GPO Style Manual*.
- # Acknowledgment information.
- # Outline of OVC coordination and production tasks.
- # Contents of the OVC submission packet.
- # Legal and policy requirements.
- # OVC's role in the publication's completion and dissemination.

In addition, appendixes are attached. For your convenience, they can be easily detached, reproduced, and distributed as a ready reference. These include—

- # An outline for each type of OVC publication.
- # Bibliography and footnote guidelines.
- # A brief OVC style guide that emphasizes issues not covered by the *GPO Style Manual*. A short section provides “Plain English” tips for writers.

NOTE: These publication guidelines are consistent with the Special Conditions listed within your grant award.

OVC is committed to producing quality products. These guidelines will provide direction to help you and your staff work together with OVC to meet or exceed professional standards of excellence.

I. What Word Processing Application and Format Should a Grantee Use?

Follow these guidelines when submitting text to OVC in electronic form.

Software

Grantees must submit all documents to OVC in IBM-compatible Corel WordPerfect (preferably WP 8.0). OVC does not have the capability to read Apple or MacIntosh word processing applications. If WordPerfect is unavailable, submit the document in ASCII text format. If submitting in ASCII text format, *however*, ensure the electronic file is revised to accurately display headings and breaks between paragraphs. Submit three printed copies of the document

with the electronic file(s). See V. “What Should a Grantee Provide OVC Prior to the End of the Grant Period?”)

Submit tables and graphs both in print and in separate electronic files since they are often created in a different software than the word processing software.

For publications longer than 30 pages, save each chapter in individual files and name accordingly. Do not save a document longer than 30 pages as one file.

The project monitor will return the publication to the grantee for revision to the proper format if it arrives with any deviation from the above specifications.

Hardware

Submit all electronic files on an IBM-compatible formatted 3.5-inch diskette and/or on an IBM-compatible formatted zip™ drive disk.

Format

In your document, keep formatting to a **minimum**. The final version of the publication submitted to OVC will be converted to a desktop publishing software package in preparation for printing. At that time, unnecessary codes will have to be stripped away, which will delay the publishing of your grant product.

Follow these guidelines when formatting the document in word processing:

Margins. Set 1-inch margins all around (left, right, top, and bottom).

Spacing. Double-space text. Triple-space between paragraphs.

Columns. Set text in a single column running across the page.

Justification. Left-justify the text.

Indentation. Use block style. Do not use tabs or indents at the beginning of paragraphs.

Hyphenation. Do not hyphenate words at the end of a line. Although the result may be a very uneven right margin, this will be corrected during final layout and design.

Headings. Headings should use initial capital letters only. For example: *Victim Advocate Wins Nobel Prize*. Also, do not worry about headings and text splitting between pages (called “widows” and “orphans”) that result in one line of text at the top or bottom of a page. These will be corrected in final layout and design.

Bullets. Use a maximum of three levels. Two levels are preferred.

- Type the first level of bullets flush left as filled boxes.
 - Indent and type the second level as open boxes.
 - Indent and type the third level as smaller filled boxes.
- Capitalize the first letter of each bullet.
- End each bullet with a period.

Be careful not to overuse bullets. While bullets make information accessible, too many lists can confuse readers.

Fonts. Use only one font for all text. OVC publications use Times New Roman (serif). Use different point sizes of the same font to differentiate heading levels, though OVC prefers text size to be 12 point.

Headers and footers. Number your pages. However, do not use other headers and footers. Necessary headers and footers will be applied in final layout and design.

II. What Are the Various Types of Materials OVC Publishes?

Grantees/contractors should follow the outlines provided in Appendix A for OVC publications. The following is a list of outlines to OVC products in the order that they appear in the Appendix:

- # Training Bulletins.
- # Promising Practices Bulletins.
- # Symposia/Focus Group Bulletins.
- # Promising Practices Compendia.
- # Training Manuals (for participants).
- # Training Curricula (for trainers).
- # Symposia/Focus Group Reports.
- # Resource Directories.
- # Guidance Manuals.

III. What Style Does the Publication Need To Follow for Footnotes, Bibliography, Spellings, etc.?

Materials written by OVC staff or as part of an OVC grant, cooperative agreement, or contract follow the *Government Printing Office (GPO) Style Manual*.¹ The OVC Publication Unit has developed an OVC Style Guide, Appendix C, which highlights certain spellings, punctuation, capitalization, and other information helpful to writers developing Government publications. Appendix B contains bibliographic and footnote guidelines.

IV. What Acknowledgment Information Should a Grantee Include

¹Style is prescribed by the *GPO Style Manual*. U.S.C. 44, 1105 and the Government Printing and Binding Regulations, Title III, Par. 25 set out the requirement to follow the *GPO Style Manual*.

in the Publication?

The grantee should prepare an acknowledgment from OVC's viewpoint. An example follows:

OVC would like to offer special thanks to authors Tracy M. Godwin and Anne Seymour with Ann H. Crowe and Brett Macgargle for their contributions in writing this document. The staff and consultants from the American Probation and Parole Association (APPA), in cooperation with the Council of State Governments (CSG), designed and developed this document.

This publication draws on the ideas and experiences of many community corrections and victim services professionals who provide services to victims of crime across the nation. It would be impossible to acknowledge individually all who contributed; however, we would like to express our appreciation to all of those who sent in program materials, responded to APPA's Promising Victim-Related Practices in Probation and Parole application, and took the time to discuss their programs and answer numerous questions.

The following individuals provided consultation in the review of this document. Their contributions and support are greatly appreciated.

Ellen Halbert
Editor
Crime Victims Report
Austin, Texas

Carolyn Andersen
Senior Probation Officer
West Valley City, Utah

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Judicial District Manager, 15A
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Burlington, North Carolina

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Phoenix, Arizona

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Tarrant County Community Supervision and Corrections Department
Fort Worth, Texas

Special thanks and acknowledgments also are extended to Carl Wicklund, APPA Staff Director, and Mistene Stuban, Administrative Assistant, for their unwavering support and assistance throughout the development of this manual.

V. What Should a Grantee Provide OVC Prior to the End of the Grant Period?

Please refer to the flow chart for grantees at the end of this section.

The grantee/contractor agrees to**C**

- # Submit to OVC, within the first **90 days** of the start date of the grant, a comprehensive dissemination plan for each publication to be produced under the grant.
- # Submit a final draft of each publication at least **120 days** in advance of the grant's end date for the OVC project monitor to submit for review by experts in the field.² (The draft with reviewers' comments will be returned to the grantee within **30-60 days**.) In the event the grantee/contractor is unable to provide the final draft within **120 days prior** to the end of the grant, the cooperative agreement, or the contract, the grantee may request a no-cost extension to the grant period. No additional funds will be made available to the grantee in the event that substantive changes to the publication are required of the grantee. Only a small printing budget will be approved for grantees who develop materials that must be "pilot tested" before the completion of the grant. Grantees/contractors should build the **120-day** publication deadline into their grant time/task lines.
- # Secure permission, in writing, to reproduce any articles, forms, etc., as part of the publication. (See VI. "What Legal and Policy Requirements Should a Grantee Know?")
- # Make substantive and editorial changes identified through the expert review as directed by the OVC project monitor.
- # Provide final submission of the draft that reflects the recommended revisions **30 days** in advance of the end date of the grant to the OVC project monitor.

The grantee/contractor will submit the following to the OVC project monitor for final review **30 days** in advance of the grant's end date:

- # Final submission of the draft that reflects the recommended revisions **30 days** in advance of the end date of the grant to the OVC project monitor.
 - G** Three double-spaced copies of the publication.
 - G** The electronic version of the publication, formatted according to the word processing guidelines. (See I. "What Word Processing Application and Format Should a Grantee Use?")
 - G** Written permission to replicate forms, articles, training materials, etc., as necessary. (See VI. "What Legal and Policy Requirements Should a Grantee Know?")
 - G** Two camera-ready copies of any appendix materials not available in electronic format.
 - G** Copies of all comments from the peer reviewers or pilot-testing participants (mainly applicable to training curricula).
 - G** An executive summary highlighting the significant findings of the publication.

²OVC is required to submit each publication to a review process. Experts in the field and others within the U.S. Department of Justice are asked to review and comment on each publication that OVC sponsors.

VI. What Legal and Policy Requirements Should a Grantee Know?

Copyright Policy³

Material Protected by Copyright. Material protected by copyright may not be reproduced without written consent from the copyright holder, except for material for which OJP/OVC has a license. The copyright holder needs to specify how notice should be incorporated within related text, captions, or legends, such as a footnote for text or a citation with the author's name.

Contractor or Grantee Acquisition of License. The contractor/grantee is responsible for acquiring rights for copyrighted material for inclusion in U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) publications that are compiled, written, or prepared under contract or grant, including the payment of required fees.

Copyrighted Material Compiled, Written, or Prepared Under Contract or Grant. For any publication developed or purchased under an OVC grant, subgrant, or contract, OVC receives a license to use and authorize others to use the copyright for Government purposes.

VII. What OVC Does With the Final Draft

Please refer to the flow chart describing OVC's process at the end of this section.

OVC Initial Review Process

Following receipt of the grantee's draft **120 days** in advance of the grant's end date, OVC then guides the document through a process of review by experts in the field. The OVC project monitor will return the document with reviewers' comments to the grantee/contractor for revision. The grantee/contractor returns the revised version to OVC with the final submission packet **30 days** prior to the grant's end date (See V. "What Should a Grantee Provide OVC Prior to the End of the Grant Period?"). At this time, the draft will be submitted to reviewers in OJP/DOJ.

OVC Editing and Graphic Design

A member of OVC's Publication Unit will begin a professional edit of the final version of

³This copyright policy is a compilation of pertinent regulations in DOJ Order 2510.9, Chapter 2, Par. 21; OJP Instruction 1440.1b, Par 8b; and, the OJP Financial Guide, Chapter 6, Section Copyrights; and Chapter 7, Section Publications, item 4. To review copyright policy in further detail, see the sections cited above as well as the Government Printing and Binding Regulations, No. 24, Title III, Par. 17.

the document following the OJP/DOJ review process.

- # The document will be forwarded to the appropriate graphics office for design and layout once the edit is completed.
- # The design process is coordinated by the OVC Publications Program Manager with proofreading assistance from the OVC editors.

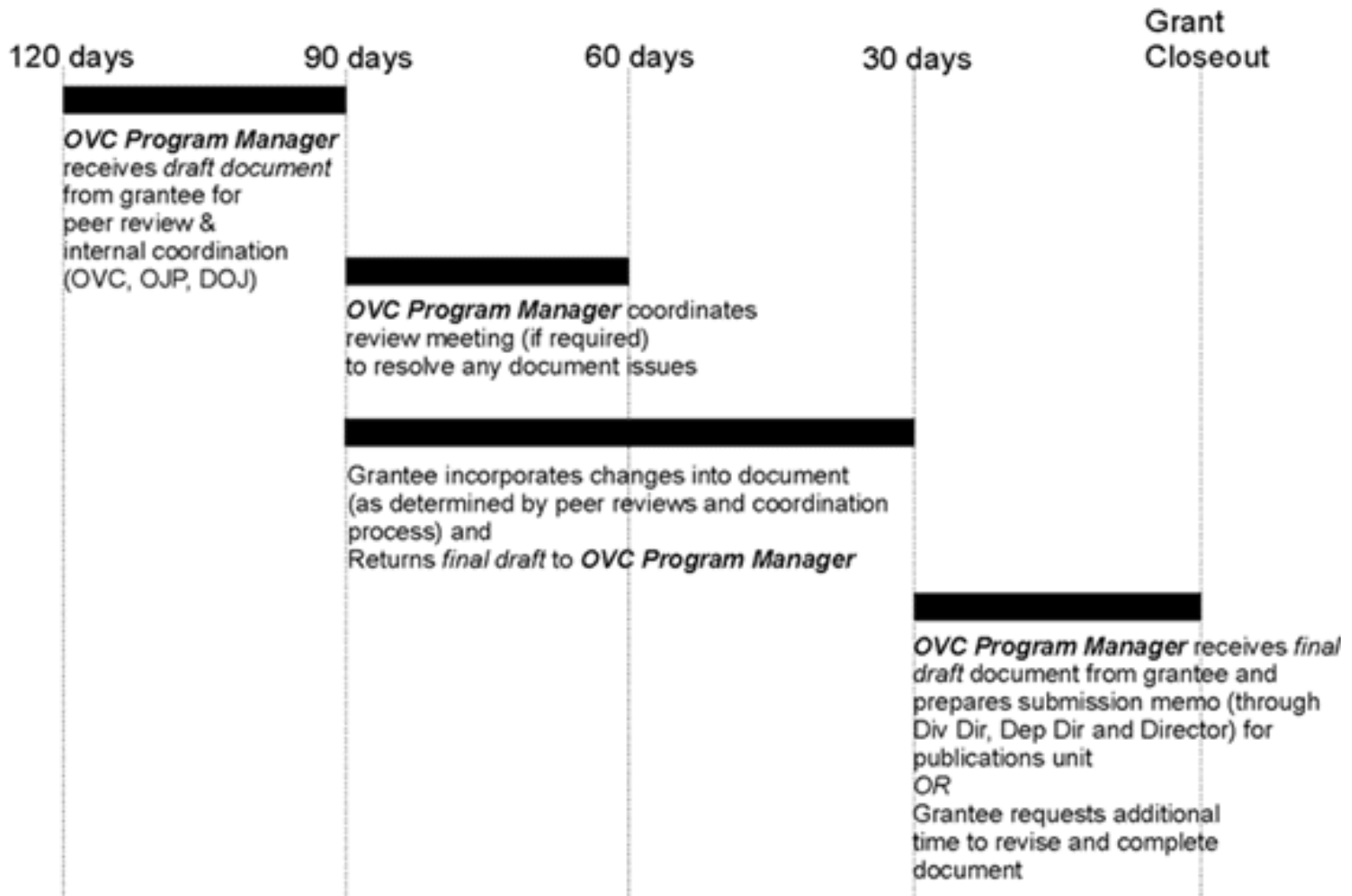
OVC Approval Process

- # The final camera-ready copy of the document, including all appropriate DOJ documentation and DOJ approvals to print, will be forwarded through the OVC Deputy Director to the OVC Director for final review and approval to print.
- # Advance Notice of the publication's release date is sent to the Attorney General.

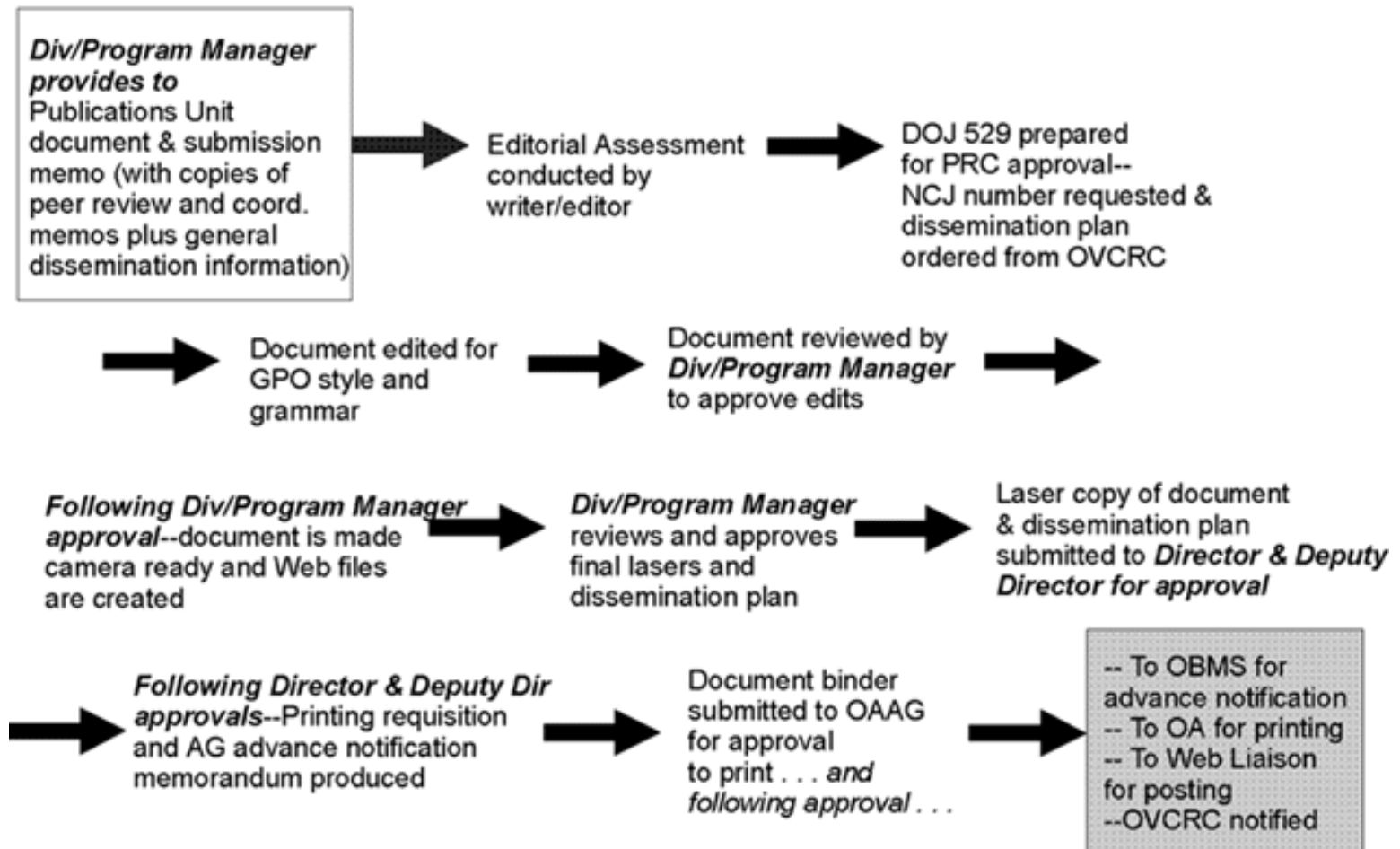
OVC Dissemination of the Publication

- # The publication dissemination plan will be reviewed and finalized by the OVC project monitor, division director, and the grantee in conjunction with the OVC Director and Deputy Director.
- # The OVC Publications Unit will coordinate the press release process (as appropriate), the uploading of the publication onto the OVC Web site, and all mailings through OVC's Resource Center (OVCRC).

Grantee Publication Process



OVC Publication Process



Appendix A—Suggested Outlines for OVC Publications

Suggested outlines follow a consistent pattern. They usually contain the following:

- A. ***Introduction:*** Describes briefly the promising program or definition of the concept, including a statement of the importance of the practice/concept to crime victims' rights and needs.
- B. ***Goals:*** States the program's concepts and goals. May be in bulleted form.
- C. ***Implementation:*** Describes the efforts to put the program's concepts into practice. Should provide an outline of steps to follow.
- D. ***Lessons Learned:*** Explains what the program's concepts have demonstrated thus far, including the current research.
- E. ***Sources for Further Information:*** Directs the reader where to learn more about the program's concepts. Should include grantee contact information.

Some variances occur among types of OVC publications. This Appendix provides individual outlines for the grantees' convenience.

Bulletins

Bulletins present overviews of emerging issues and promising programs and practices that likely will be covered in greater detail in reports, compendia, and manuals (executive summaries of these longer documents provide the content for bulletins). Bulletins are designed to provide information about suggested training, promising practices that could be replicated nationwide, or findings and questions raised by symposia or focus groups. OVC publishes three types of Bulletins: Training Bulletins, Promising Practices Bulletins, and Symposia/Focus Group Bulletins.

Length: 10B16 pages.

Suggested General Bulletin Outline

- A. **Letter from the OVC Director:** OVC provides a brief introduction to the bulletin from the OVC Director in a one-to-three paragraph overview of the bulletin's content, highlighting the importance of the topic.
- B. **Introduction/Purpose:** A one-to-three paragraph message that draws the reader into the document, stating the purpose of the project and describing its effect on victims' rights

and/or needs. The introduction identifies the intended audience; explains the intended use of the document; and describes what limitations, if any, should be imposed on the findings or the information.

- C. Background:** One to two pages of historical and statistical information describe the situation prior to the program's funding, revealing what led to the need for the project/program.
- D. Literature Review:** Two to three paragraphs provide the current research and theories of the subject, including what is known, what is clearly not known, and what is ambiguous. Not all projects will include a literature review.
- E. Description of the Project:** One to two pages answer the question, "What did the training, promising practices project, or focus group/symposia do?" The following elements are included
 - 1. Project strategy
 - 2. Project period
 - 3. Target audience.
 - 4. Problems encountered.
 - 5. Achievements.
- F. Findings:** Four to five pages explain the results obtained from this work. Include measurable indicators here such as number of programs, number of victims served, cost data, etc. What kinds of problems were revealed and how can they be resolved?
- G. Implications and Recommendations:** Four to five pages discuss what conclusions can be drawn from this effort. What policy implications does this project have? How might the information collected advance the victims' field? What kinds of projects might follow this one? Include recommendations for improving the project and for helping victim service providers.
- H. Sources for Additional Information:** Provide information about where to obtain products or more information about the project, including
 - 1. Reading/videotape list.
 - 2. Current contact information, including the address and phone number of the author or the grant agency.
 - 3. Contact information for additional copies of the publication or larger report, including the address and phone number for the OVC Resource Center.
 - 4. Contact information, including the addresses and phone numbers for any other victim service organizations that may provide valuable information about the project or its subject matter.

The particular requirements for each type of bulletin are listed below and should be inserted into the general outline above as noted by each category.

Training Bulletins

- I. Summary of the Training:** (Insert after "E. Description of the Project") Three to six pages summarize the training itself, highlighting major points and concepts, and using examples as well as participant feedback.
- II. Grantee and Advisory Staff Information:** A paragraph about the organization that undertook the project and advisory staff. Provide readers information about how to obtain the products or more information about the project (see "H. Sources for Additional Information" above).

NOTE: Training bulletins do not require a literature review.

Promising Practices Bulletins

- I. Guiding Questions:** (Insert after "D. Literature Review") Two to three paragraphs explain the grantee's goals with this project. This section should summarize concretely and succinctly the questions raised in the literature review.
- II. Project Strategy:** (Use in place of "E. Description of the Project") One to two pages describe the project methodology, including
 - A. Sample:** How was the sample chosen? What were the selection criteria? How many respondents were there?
 - B. Data collection:** How was the information obtained? Written or telephone interviews? Site visits? Documents?
 - C. Measurement:** What kind of instruments or criteria were used to assess the collected data? What items were included in the interview questions?
 - D. Analysis:** How was the information collated, coded, or sorted? What procedures were used? What are the criteria for assessing "promising practices"? How were they developed?
- III. Grantee and Advisory Staff Information:** A paragraph about the organization that undertook the project and advisory staff consulted.

Symposia/Focus Group Bulletins

- I. Description of the Project:** (Replace "E. Description of the Project" above with this description) One to two pages that answer the question, "What did the project do?" Elements should include the following:
 - A. Participants:** Who participated? What disciplines were represented? How were participants and disciplines selected?
 - B. Strategy:** What were the guiding questions? How were the events (focus groups or symposia) structured and facilitated?
 - C. Duration and location:** How long were the events? Where were they held?

II. Findings and Recommendations: (II. and III. replace "F. Findings" and "G. Implications and Recommendations") Three to six pages describe the major problems and gaps identified, highlighting promising practices and brief recommendations. Each recommendation should have corresponding explanatory text.

III. Implications: One or two paragraphs address the implications of these findings for the field, for OVC, for communities, and for the Nation at large. How will these findings help improve crime victims' services and rights?

IV. Grantee and Advisory Staff Information: A paragraph about the organization that undertook the project and advisory staff consulted.

NOTE: Symposia/focus group bulletins do not require a literature review.

Promising Practices Compendia

These are technical assistance documents that draw from national-scope surveys of model practices or programs in topic areas supporting victim issues. They identify model components and selected examples, and provide guidance on replicating and adapting model elements to create new programs and refine existing ones. Compendia are also summarized in Bulletin form.

Length: 25–50 pages.

Suggested Outline

- A. Acknowledgments:** Provides information about the authors and organizations responsible for the development, review, research, and writing of the document, written from the viewpoint of OVC (see example on page 5). Also includes advisory staff consulted.
- B. Executive Summary:** In one to three pages, depending on the complexity of the subject, provide an overview of the compendium and convey its importance to the field of victims' rights. The Executive Summary should explain the purpose of the project; briefly describe the project and its importance to crime victims' rights; provide background information, explaining the need for the project; identify the intended audience; explain the methodology used; and describe the organization that undertook the project.
- C. Table of Contents.**
- D. Introduction/Overview:** Identifies the compendium's purpose, how it can be used, how it is organized, and its intended audience.
- E. List of Critical Program Elements:** How does the grantee define a "promising" practice or program? This should include primary (basic) and secondary (beyond the basics) elements that

show why a promising practice effectively serves crime victims' needs. This section may include a fictitious scenario depicting an ideal program or system, and one depicting a more realistic situation. This section may also categorize practices for the area under discussion with lists of the key elements within each type.

- F. Descriptions of Outstanding Programs and Practices:** Provide examples of best practices in action. Describe the critical elements that make these programs work. For example, a memorandum of understanding, shared training sessions, or a task force may be the unique element that makes a police-based victim assistance program successful. Strong, concise descriptions of practices from particular programs or narratives illustrate how the practice or element worked, how its use helped to overcome a barrier, or how the victim was helped.
- G. Implementation Guidance:** Describes how to design and run a program that incorporates the promising practices and program elements. This should include guidance on where to look for funding, whom to involve, available resources for training and technical assistance, and a focus on the process.
- H. Problems/Barriers:** Identifies some of the challenges to implementing the promising practices or approaches. Examples might include deciding whom to involve in the planning process and how to deal with interagency rivalries, political considerations, referrals, etc. How can these problems be addressed positively?
- I. Matrix:** Lists programs reviewed and program components. For example, this could be the number and kinds of staff, special equipment, and services provided.
- J. Illustrative Aids:** Provides tools that quickly summarize important information such as definitions, lists of training resources, examples of mission statements, and vignettes.
- K. List of Program Addresses, Contacts, and Resource Materials:**
 - A. Addresses for programs cited in the publication so that users can call them to get information.
 - B. Information on where and how to access key resource materials.
 - C. Funding and training resources with contact information, such as telephone numbers and/or mailing addresses, if this information is not included earlier in a figure or box.
 - D. Contact information, including address and phone number, for the OVC Resource Center.
- L. Appendixes:** Include examples of critical elements described in the report, such as a model memorandum of understanding, a model victim impact statement, an outline of a training curriculum, and a description of a facility.

Training Packages

Training packages contain materials used to train selected professionals, such as law enforcement officials, medical practitioners, or mixed groups of participants, on skills that will enhance their

capacity to serve crime victims effectively. Training packages can include one or all of the following: **participant manuals** that give basic concepts and specific, practice-related information; **trainer's manuals** that consist of material contained in the participant manual along with annotated source material, lesson plans/objectives, and notes on audio/visual aides; and **training-for-trainers manuals** that establish the content in terms of adult learning theory and provide strategies for mentoring trainers new to a given topic.

Length: No more than 200 pages.

Suggested Participant Manual Outline

- A. Acknowledgments:** Provides information about the authors and organizations responsible for the development, review, research, and writing of the document (see example on page 5).
- B. Executive Summary:** Two to four pages explain the manual's target audience, the purpose of the training, and how it serves victims' needs. Describe the organization that undertook the project and advisory staff consulted. Also, provide a brief description of participant response to the training. Additionally, provide the reader information on where to go to contract for a trainer or to learn where training sessions are offered (as appropriate).
- C. Table of Contents.**
- D. Introduction/Overview:** Consists of background of training issues; information about the organization providing the training; and trainer biographies, if appropriate.
- E. Chapters with Course Content:** The particular learning objective should be stated at the beginning of each chapter. Content should be easily accessible. Use bullets, graphs, and illustrations as appropriate.
- C. Appendixes:** The appendix information should include the following:
 - 1. References.
 - 2. Glossary of terms.
 - 3. Overheads/handouts, referring to specific chapters.
 - 4. Space for taking notes or self-quizzing.
 - 5. Resource list of national and other organizations (OVC Resource Center), with points of contact, telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, etc.
 - 6. Sources for additional information, including lists of applicable publications, laws, policies, etc.

Suggested Trainer's Manual Outline

- A. Acknowledgments:** Provides information about the authors and organizations responsible for the development, review, research, and writing of the document (see example on page 5).
- B. Executive Summary:** Two to four pages summarize the training's target audience, the purpose of the training, how it serves victims' needs, and how to conduct the training. Describe the organization that undertook the project and advisory staff consulted. Also, summarize participant response to the training and provide information concerning access to outside support for trainers (as appropriate).
- C. Introduction/Overview:** Describes the target audience who will receive the training, how the training can be used, and how the training is organized.
- D. Table of Contents.**
- E. Course/Training Objectives:** Articulates the goals of the course. For example, describes the knowledge/skills the training should impart.
- F. Chapters with Course Content:** State the particular learning objective at the beginning of each chapter. Chapters should include the following information:
 - 1. Methodology (for example, trainer's script, exercises, etc.).
 - 2. References.
 - 3. Materials and equipment required.
 - 4. Videotapes/overheads/handouts.
- G. Case Studies:** These examples illustrate the principles and concepts of the training.
- H. Appendixes:** Appendix information should include the following:
 - 1. Applicable laws and regulations.
 - 2. References.
 - 3. Glossary of terms.
 - 4. Overheads/handouts.
 - 5. Master tests or quizzes, including the answers.
 - 6. Resource list of national and other organizations (OVC Resource Center), with points of contact, telephone numbers, e-mail addresses, etc.
 - 7. Sources for additional information, including lists of applicable publications, laws, and policies.
- I. Evaluation Forms:** At a minimum, evaluation forms should query training recipients on the quality of training content, applicability of training to recipient's work with victims, how recipient plans to use training to serve victims, type of organization recipient works for, information regarding other training received on the topic area, etc.

Suggested Training-for-Trainers Manual Outline

The training-for-trainers packages should include the following:

- A. Acknowledgments:** Information about the authors and organizations responsible for the development, review, research, and writing of the document (see example on page 5).
- B. Executive Summary:** Two to four pages that give an overview of the training package, including who the training is for, the purpose of the training, how it serves victims' needs, and what adult learning theory was used to design the training. Describe the organization that undertook the project and advisory staff consulted. Also, provide participant response to the training.
- C. Table of Contents.**
- D. Introduction/Overview:** Describe the training curriculum, how it is organized, and what the trainers should learn during the course. Also, provide information about where training is available and who is sponsoring the training (as appropriate).
- E. Curriculum:** Provide a comprehensive curriculum with annotations, references, and information on accessing additional resources to enhance the curriculum.
- F. Modular Training Segments:** Training segments should include the following information:
 - 1. Section goals and learning objectives.
 - 2. Section overviews.
 - 3. Self-tests (either pretests, posttests, or a combination of both).
 - 4. Guidelines for trainees to rehearse techniques in 10–15 minute segments in front of their peers.
- G. Guidelines for Training Techniques:** Detailed guidelines and experiential exercises on training techniques, such as adult learning processes, group work, use of audio/visual aids, including overhead transparencies, computer-generated slide shows, videotapes, and flip charts.
- H. Icebreakers:** Ideas on how to begin each training-for-trainers session.
- I. Learning Activities:** List of suggested activities.
- J. Overheads:** Transparencies that correspond with the curriculum, accompanied by specific page references and speakers' notes.
- K. Guidelines for Maximizing Training Outreach Activities:** Guidelines on activities such as conducting training programs or additional training-for-trainers via satellite at college

campuses or police departments, tying into existing training conferences.

- L. List of National Resources:** Includes standardized national resources that are applicable to all training sessions, including—
1. National toll-free information and referral numbers for victim assistance and criminal justice agencies.
 2. OVC Training and Technical Assistance Center.
 3. OVC Resource Center.
 4. NCJRS registration form and a list of relevant resources available with NCJ order numbers.
 5. Resources available electronically from the U.S. Department of Justice, such as Web sites, search engines, gophers, etc.
- M. Evaluation Component:** A comprehensive evaluation format and strategy that includes immediate onsite evaluations of the training-for-trainer's program and a 90-day or 180-day followup evaluation to determine if and how the program and resources were used.

Symposia and Focus Group Reports

Symposia Reports

Documents the proceedings of symposia on victim-related topics in which practitioners and/or experts gathered to share their respective knowledge and obtain feedback, learn about related efforts, and generate recommendations for OVC and the field. The reports define the issues under discussion; address literature findings on the topics; describe the methodologies used in the event; discuss gaps, promising practices, and approaches; identify areas for collaboration; and make recommendations for action in the field and by OVC.

Length: Approximately 15–60 pages.

Focus Group Reports

Contains documentation of the proceedings of structured focus groups that are designed to elicit information about victim-related topic areas. The reports define the issues under discussion; summarize literature findings on the topics; address the methodologies used in the event; discuss gaps, promising practices, and approaches; and make recommendations for action in the field and by OVC.

Length: 15–30 pages.

Suggested Symposia/Focus Group Outline

- A. Acknowledgments:** Provides information about the authors and organizations responsible for the development, review, research, and writing of the document (see example on page 5).

- B. Executive Summary:** One to two pages provide an overview of the report and highlight the importance of the topic for protecting victims' rights and meeting victims' needs. Identify the issues and problems affecting victims' rights and needs and what limitations exist, if any, that should be imposed on the findings developed out of the symposia/focus group. Include resulting recommendations and an action plan that improve the protection of victims' rights and fulfillment of their needs. Provide information about symposia/focus group participants.
- C. Introduction/Overview:** Identifies the report's purpose, how it can be used, how it is organized, and its intended audience.
- D. Background and Goals:** Provides a statement of the problem and intended outcome of the symposia/focus group(s). Include historical and statistical information.
- E. Project Description:** Explains project design, including
1. *Participants:* Who were the participants? What disciplines did they represent? How were they selected?
 2. *Strategy:* How were the symposia/focus groups structured and facilitated? What were the guiding questions?
 3. *Duration and location:* How long were the symposia/focus groups? When and where were they held?
- F. Principal Findings:** Analyzes the symposia/focus group discussions. What issues and problems did symposia/focus group participants identify?
- G. Recommendations:** Analyzes the symposia/focus group recommendations for addressing the identified issues and problems. Each recommendation should be accompanied by explanatory text.
- H. Action Plan:** Distills the symposia/focus group recommendations into a plan for action to provide clear, practical steps to implement the recommendations.
- I. Sources for Additional Information:** Provides information for the readers to obtain products or more information about the project, including
1. Reading/videotape list.
 2. Contact information, including address and phone number, for the author or grant agency.
 3. Contact information, including address and phone number, for the OVC Resource Center.
 4. Contact information, including addresses and phone numbers, for any other victim service organizations that may provide valuable information about the project.

Resource Directories

Resource directories provide a compilation of information, such as victims' compensation programs, contact names, mailing addresses, and phone numbers helpful to victims of crime.

Length: Determined by the subject matter.

Suggested Resource Directory Outline

- A. Acknowledgments:** Contains information about the authors and organizations responsible for the development, review, research, and writing of the document (see example on page 5).
- B. Introduction/Overview:** Identifies the intended audience, the directory's purpose and use, and how it is organized.
- C. Background:** Discusses why the resources in the directory were chosen and how the information was collected.
- D. Matrix of Listing:** Lists all the resource information.
- E. Sources for Additional Information:** Provides information for the readers to obtain products or learn more about the topic, including—
 - 1. Contact information, including address and phone number, for the author or grant agency.
 - 2. Contact information, including address and phone number, for the OVC Resource Center.
 - 3. Contact information, including addresses and phone numbers, for any other victim service organizations that may provide valuable information about the project.

Guidance Manuals

Stand-alone resources that provide instruction on how to establish a program, follow a protocol, or provide specific service, including a description of existing outstanding programs and practices.

Length: Generally 50–100 pages.

Suggested Guidance Manual Outline

- A. Acknowledgments:** Provides information about the authors and organizations responsible for the development, review, research, and writing of the document. Also, include advisory staff consulted (see example on page 5).
- B. Executive Summary:** Two to four pages, depending on the complexity of the subject, provide an overview of the compendium. The Executive Summary should explain the purpose of the project or program; briefly describe the project or program and its importance to crime victims' rights and needs; provide background information explaining the need for the project; and explain the methodology used and the organization that undertook the project.
- C. Table of Contents.**

- D. Introduction/Overview:** Identifies the intended audience, the manual’s purpose, how it can be used, and how it is organized.
- E. Description of the Program:** Describes the strategy used to develop the program, the goals and objectives of the program, and the critical elements that make the program work.
- F. Implementation Guidance:** Provides guidance on how to design and run the program, including where to look for funding, whom to involve, available training and technical assistance resources, and a focus on the process.
- G. Problems/Barriers:** Describes some of the challenges to implementing the program, including deciding whom to involve in the planning process and dealing with interagency rivalries, political considerations, etc. How can these problems be addressed positively?
- H. Evaluation:** Discusses how the evaluated program ensured that all goals and objectives were met. Explores the evaluation process by asking, “What is the best method for evaluation of the program and how can the methodology be replicated in other jurisdictions?”
- I. List of Program Addresses, Contacts, and Resource Materials:**
1. Addresses for programs cited in the publication so that users can call and get information.
 2. Information on where and how to access key resource materials.
 3. Funding and training resources with contact information (telephone numbers and/or mailing addresses), if this information is not included earlier in a figure or box.
 4. Contact information, including address and phone number, for the OVC Resource Center.
- J. Appendixes:** Provides examples of critical elements described in the report, such as a model memorandum of understanding, a model victim impact statement, an outline of a training curriculum, or a description of a facility.

Appendix B—Bibliography and Footnote Guidelines

Bibliography/Footnotes

Since the *GPO Style Manual* does not specifically address bibliography/citation style, the OVC publication staff recommends following the *Chicago Manual of Style*. The following entries are recommended style formats that are organized under two categories: bibliography and footnotes. Not every situation is listed so refer to the *Chicago Manual of Style* for exceptions. If you prefer another style, the cites must be consistent and must include the following information: author; title of article; title of publication; volume number, month, and year of publication if taken from a journal; place of publication; publisher; year of publication only if a book; and page numbers, if appropriate.

Bibliography

Format for Books

Author (last name, first name). Title in italics. Place of publication: Publisher, year of publication.

Example:

Jones, John. *History of Criminology*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1992.

Format for Periodicals

Author (last name, first name). Title of Article in quotation marks (initial cap all words except articles and most prepositions under 4 letters long). Title of periodical in italics, volume number (month and year of publication in parentheses): page numbers of article.

Example:

Jones, John. "Crime in the Community." *Journal of Crime*, 10 (June 1992):3B12.

Format for OVC and Other Government Series

Author (last name, first name), Title of publication in italics, Title of series in initial caps (except for articles and prepositions under 4 letters long), volume and number. Place of publication: publisher, year and month of publication.

Examples:

Visher, Christy A., *Pretrial Drug Testing*, Research in Brief, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, September 1992.

Office for Victims of Crime, *New Directions from the Field: Victims' Rights and Services for the 21st Century*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime, August 1998.

NOTE: The Government Printing Office is no longer to be named as a publisher. Instead, include the names of both the government office and agency.

Author Issues

Multiple authors: The first author should have last name first, but the other(s) should be first name first. For example, Hillsman, Sally T. and Laura A. Winterfield.

No authors: only editors, place the editors' name in the author slot. For example, Flannegan, T.J. and K.M. Jamieson, eds.

If an agency or institution is both the author and publisher, use in both places.

Example:

Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1984.

Special Problems

Chapters in a book: Citations of chapters also must include names of authors and editors.

Author (last name, first name), title of chapter in quotation marks, "in" Title of book in italics, "ed." editors' names (first names first), Publication place: publisher, year of publication: all page numbers of chapter).

Example:

Smith, Robert, "Crime and the Cities," in *A Review of Criminal Justice*, eds. Ellen Tomes and Edward Bock, New York: Wiley, 1990:25B56.

Unpublished manuscripts: Reports to OVC should follow this format:

Brown, William, "Intermediate Sanctions," National Institute of Justice, Unpublished Report, CX-000-000, 1992.

NOTE: Always provide the grant number.

Telnet Site

Provide the author's name (date of publication) in parenthesis. The Title of the Document. The title of the full work, if applicable, underlined. Include the word *telnet*, followed by the complete telnet address, with no closing punctuation, and directions to access the document (end with the date of access, in parentheses).

Example:

Aquatic Conservation Network. (n.d.). About the Aquatic Conservation Network. National Capital Freenet. Telnet freenet.carleton.ca login as guest, go acn, press 1 (1996, May 28).

NOTE: In bibliographies, e-mail addresses are not italicized as they are within the text of a document.

n.d. means no date.

Footnotes

Format for Books

¹Author (last name, first name), title in italics, place of publication: publisher, year of publication: page number(s).

Example:

¹Jones, John, *History of Criminology*, New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1992:10.

Format for Periodicals

¹Author (last name, first name), title of article in quotation marks (initial cap all words except articles and most prepositions under 4 letters long), title of periodical in italics, volume number (month and year of publication in parenthesis): page number(s).

Example:

¹Jones, John, "Crime in the Community," *Journal of Crime*, 10 (June 1992):3B4.

If no volume number is given, omit this item and the comma after the periodical title.
Crime (June 1992):3B4.

Format for OVC and Other Government Series

¹Visher, Christy A., *Pretrial Drug Testing*, Research in Brief, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, September 1992, 12.

²Office for Victims of Crime, *New Directions from the Field: Victims' Rights and Services for the 21st Century*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime, August 1998, 21.

NOTE: The Government Printing Office is no longer to be named as a publisher. Instead, include the names of both the government office and agency.

Author Issues

Multiple authors: The first author should have last name first, but the other(s) should have first name first.

Example: Hillsman, Sally T. and Laura A. Winterfield.

No authors: If only editors are provided, the editors' names go in the author slot.

Example: Flannegan, T.J. and K.M. Jamieson, eds.

If an agency or institution is both the author and publisher, use both.

Example:

¹Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1984.

Format for Repeating a Citation

In footnotes, if you wish to cite the same source that was cited just before the present one, use "Ibid." followed by a comma and a page number.

Example: Ibid., 3.

If the source you wish to cite has already been given a full citation earlier in the endnotes, use the author's last name; the title of the book, document, or article; and the page number.

Examples:

¹Jones, "Crime in the Community," 5. (An article in a periodical)

²Visher, *Pretrial Drug Testing*, 2. (This is a document in a series. Apply the same style to a book.)

Special Problems

Chapters in a book: Cites of chapters must also include names of authors and editors.

¹Author (last name, first name), title of chapter in quotation marks, "in" title of book in italics, "ed." editors' names (first names first), publication place: publisher, year of publication: page number(s) cited (or, if in a reference list, page numbers cited).

Example:

¹Smith, Robert, "Crime and the Cities," in *A Review of Criminal Justice*, eds. Ellen Tomes and Edward Bock, New York: Wiley, 1990: 25-26.

Several references in one footnote: Separate by semicolons. If the items have been previously cited, state together as in: See Jones, "Crime," 3; Miller, "Jails," 5; and Thomas, *Prisons*, 6.

Unpublished manuscripts: Reports to OVC should follow this format (for footnote):

¹Brown, William, "Intermediate Sanctions," National Institute of Justice, Unpublished Report, CX-000-000, 1992:3-4.

NOTE: Always provide the grant number.

Telnet Site

Provide the author's name; the date of publication, in parenthesis; the title of the document; and the title of the full work, if applicable, underlined. Include the word *telnet*, followed by the complete telnet address with no closing punctuation. Follow with directions to access the document. End with the date of access, in parentheses.

Example:

¹Aquatic Conservation Network. (n.d.). About the Aquatic Conservation Network. National Capital Freenet. Telnet freenet.carleton.ca login as guest, go acn, press 1 (1996, May 28).

FYI: In the text of a document, e-mail addresses should be italicized so the address appears as a whole unit. When the e-mail address is a parenthetical, be sure the surrounding parenthesis are also italicized.

Example:

Send your comments about this style guide to the publication unit
(*userid@ojp.usdoj.gov*).

Some people prefer to set off e-mail addresses with angle brackets rather than parenthesis.

Example:

Send your comments about this style guide to the publication unit
<*userid@ojp.usdoj.gov*>.

Appendix C—OVC Style Guide

The following style guide has been created for the convenience of those who produce documents for publication by OVC. This style guide attempts to achieve consistency in cases of ambiguity. Most of the following rules are culled from the *U.S. Government Printing Office Style Manual (GPO Style Manual)*; others have developed through common usage or political sensitivity. In addition to traditional style guide topics, this style guide contains some spellings of computer/Internet terms, an abbreviated section to help writers achieve the Clinton administration's "Plain English" directive,¹ and a reading list.

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¹The Clinton administration has instructed all Federal agencies to pay close attention to how their letters, directives, and enforcement actions are written. As the Securities and Exchange Commission's *Plain English Handbook* states, "using plain English assures the orderly and clear presentation of complex information so that [readers] have the best possible chance of understanding it."

Acronyms

ASCII - American Standard Code for Information Interchange
ATF - Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms
BJA - Bureau of Justice Assistance
BJS - Bureau of Justice Statistics
BOP - Federal Bureau of Prisons
CASA - Court Appointed Special Advocate
CJA - Children's Justice Act
COPS - Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
CVF - Crime Victims Fund
DEA - Drug Enforcement Administration
DOD - U.S. Department of Defense
DoEd - U.S. Department of Education
DOJ - U.S. Department of Justice
EOUSA - Executive Office for United States Attorneys
EOWS - Executive Office for Weed and Seed
FCVD - Federal Crime Victims Division
FEMA - Federal Emergency Management Agency
FLETC - Federal Law Enforcement Training Center
FY - fiscal year, FY 1999
FYI - for your information
HHS - U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
HUD - U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
HTML - hypertext markup language
INS - Immigration and Naturalization Service
JCAHO - Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations
LEAA - Law Enforcement Assistance Administration
LECC - Law Enforcement Community Coordinator
LLEBG - Local Law Enforcement Block Grants
NCJRS - National Criminal Justice Reference Service
NCVC - National Center for Victims of Crime [formerly NVC - National Victim Center]
NIC - National Institute of Corrections
NIJ - National Institute of Justice
NOVA - National Organization of Victim Assistance
NSA - National Sheriffs' Association
OJJDP - Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
OJP - Office of Justice Programs
OSLDPS - Office for State and Local Domestic Preparedness Support
OVC - Office for Victims of Crime
OVCRC - Office for Victims of Crime Resource Center
PAVNET - Partnerships Against Violence Network
SCAD - State Compensation and Assistance Division
SPD - Special Projects Division
STOP - Services Training Officers Prosecutors

TAPIRU - Technical Assistance, Publications, and Information Resources Unit
TTAC - Training and Technical Assistance Center
URL - uniform resource locator
VAIC - Victim Assistance in Indian Country
VAWA - Violence Against Women Act
VAWO - Violence Against Women Office
VOCA - Victims of Crime Act

Capitalization

\$ *Capitalize terms that refer to a particular series of OVC publications such as a Fact Sheet, Bulletin, Promising Practices Compendium, Executive Summary, Resource Directory, etc.*

\$ *Capitalize each word in a hyphenated word if used in a title: *The Well-Trained Writer*.*

\$ *Do not capitalize prepositions in titles unless the preposition has more than three letters or begins a line in the title.*

Examples: "Convicted by Juries, Exonerated by Science"

GPO capitalizes 'to' if part of an infinitive: "To Be or Not To Be" (3.51)

\$ *Lowercase text references to elements of document (for example, chapter 1, appendix A).*

\$ *Although the following words are not listed under capitalization in the GPO Style Manual, OVC capitalizes them:*

Examples: the Deaf (OVC prefers the term *people with disabilities* over *disabled people*)

(Also Hard-of-Hearing and Deaf-Blind - n. and u.m.)

Tribal as in State, Federal, and Tribal governments

Indian Country

the Internet

the Web

Web page

Web site

World Wide Web

NOTE: listserv and home page are not capitalized.

\$ *The word **the** is lower case when used with newspaper and magazine titles, trains, firm names, vessels, and government departments and bureaus:*

the *Washington Post*

the *Atlantic Monthly*

the Orient Express

\$ *Names of countries, domains, and administrative divisions*

American Indian rather than Native American
the Nation
the Federal Government
the Government
the State of New York
Tribal as in Federal, State, and Tribal governments
all 50 States but church and state, state's evidence
Territory (Canada); Northwest Territories, but territory of Guam or the Nation's 50 States
and its territories
Province of Ontario, the Province; but province in general sense
U.S. Embassies, but embassies in 30 different countries
U.S. Attorney's office

\$ *Names of calendar divisions:* Capitalize months and days of the week, but not seasons:

January, February
Monday, Tuesday
but spring, summer, fall (autumn), winter

\$ *Titles of persons:* Capitalize civil, religious, military, professional titles, and titles of nobility when they immediately succeed a name:

President Reagan, the President
Charles Robb, Governor of Virginia
the Governor of Virginia
the Governor but the attorney general of Maine
the secretary of state of Idaho
the commanding general
the consul general
the chair of the committee

Compounding/Hyphenation

Note: In the list below, unit modifier (adjective) is abbreviated u.m., noun as n., verb as v., and adverb as adv.

Hyphenation

Anti-Terrorism Act
community-based (u.m.)
community-at-large (n.)
cross-cultural
cross-training
e-mail
fee-for-service
hospital-based (u.m.)
in-kind (u.m.: in-kind gift, payment in-kind)

long-range
 long-term (u.m.)
 multi-State (but combines with second term without hyphen if second term is lowercase)
 non-Federal (but combines with second term without hyphen if second term is lowercase)
 pre-disposition, pre-adjudication, post-disposition, and post-adjudication (because
 predisposition is a word in itself and since frequently used with the other terms then
 hyphenate them as well)
 risk-assessment plan (u.m.), but risk assessment (n.)
 self-blame
 self-defense
 short-term (u.m.)
 sound-proof (u.m.)
 up-to-date (u.m.; up to date, adv.)
 victim-offender (u.m., use hyphen), but victim/witness (u.m., use slash)

No hyphen

care giver, but caretaker
 follow up (v., dictionary), but followup (n., u.m. GPO)
 grant making (n.), but grant-making authority (u.m.)
 health care (u.m. and n.) (but Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare
 Organizations)
 home page
 on call (u.m.)
 problem solving (n.), problem-solving (u.m.).
 roll call
 work force
 work group

One Word (No hyphen)

antidrug	inhouse	postxxxxx (no hyphen, GPO)
aftercare	inservice (inservice training)	prexxxxx (no hyphen, GPO)
backup (n., u.m.)	lifesaving (n. and u.m.)	posttraumatic
caretaker	listserv	posttrial (unless used with
cyberspace	longstanding	pre-disposition, etc.)
database	multidisciplinary	pretrial (same as above)
decisionmaker,	multiagency	presentence
decisionmaking	nationwide	preadolescence
drawback (u.m.)	online (u.m.; adv.)	soundproof (v.)
followup (n. and u.m.) but	onsite (u.m.; adv.)	startup (u.m.)
follow up (v.)	overgeneralize	statewide
fundraising	percent	underserved
indepth (u.m.)	policymaker, policymaking	

Italics

- \$ Do not italicize commonly used terms, such as *et al.*, *raison d'être*, and *Ibid.*
- \$ The preference is to italicize titles of publications rather than to underline them.
- \$ Italicize e-mail addresses and Web sites within text.

Numerals

Spelling: *Spell out numbers nine and under except for time, measurement, age, and percent.*

Examples:	2 hours	3 fiscal years	9 years old
	3 feet by 4 feet	21st century	25 percent

Listing: *When in a sentence in which 1 item in a list is 10 or more, use numerals.*

Example: The list of supplies included 4 pencils, 10 boxes of paper clips, and 3 boxes of stationery.

Expression: *Units of measurement, time, and money are always expressed in figures. This does not affect the form of expression for other numerical expressions within a sentence.*

Example: All five orders arrived 2 hours late.

Money: 75 cents *but* three quarters

Unit modifiers: 5-day week, *but* five-man board or two-story house
8-hour day
\$2 million grant
the 1920s or the twenties; not the '20s or the 20s
but age: in her seventies

Begin sentence: *Numerals are spelled out at the beginning of a sentence or heading. Rephrase a sentence or heading to avoid beginning with figures.*

Examples: Five years ago, the Crime Victims Fund was three times lower than it is today.
A total of 207,500 employees *or* Some 207,500 employees *or* Approximately 207,500 employees have health plans. . . *not* 207,500 employees . . .

Plurals

appendixes	attorneys at law	attorneys general
criteria	general counsels	

Punctuation

No set of rules can cover every situation, but the following examples are frequently questioned. For more examples, see GPO Style Manual, pages 117B126.

Apostrophes and Possessives

1975's tax return (limit possessive form of numerals to this instance)

OVC's grants

5 million dollars' worth (or materials worth \$5 million)

x's and y's, the three R's *but* yeses and noes

2 hours' travel time

but Crime Victims Fund

U.S. Marshals Service

\$ *for nouns ending in "s":*

hostess's

The Dumas' brief

\$ *for compound nouns:*

Attorneys general's appointments

attorney at law's fee

\$ *Generally, don't use the apostrophe after names of countries and other organized bodies ending in "s":*

United States control

United Nations meeting

but Veterans' Administration (conforms to enabling statute)

Congress' attitude

Colon

\$ *Use a colon before a final clause that extends or amplifies preceding matter or summarizes a series of ideas.*

Examples:

Congress' strong advocacy for crime victims was reflected in the Victim and Witness Protection Act's statement of purpose: "to enhance and protect the necessary role of crime victims and witnesses in the criminal justice process; to ensure that the Federal Government does all that is possible to assist victims and witnesses of crime, within the limits of available resources, without infringing on the Constitutional rights of the defendant; and to provide model legislation for State and local governments."

Exception:

New Directions from the Field: Victims' Rights and Services for the 21st Century (may also use a colon to separate book titles from subtitles as above).

\$ *Use a colon after the introductory line in lists, tables, etc. if subentries follow.*

Example: You have the following rights: to say no to an "interview," to select the time and location for the interview, and to refuse an interview with a specific reporter.

\$ *Do not use a colon where the list is part of the sentence.*

Example: The list of supplies includes 4 pencils, 10 boxes of clips, and 3 boxes of paper.

\$ *Follow colons with a consistent amount of space throughout document.*

Comma

\$ *Use serial commas in a list:*

Examples: You must develop goals, a mission statement, and objectives.
We developed goals, created mission statements, and achieved objectives.

\$ *No serial comma in agency names:*

Example: Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms

\$ *Include comma in numerals: 1,000 not 1000.*

\$ *Omit comma between month and year: May 1998*

\$ *A comma is placed before and after a State or country when both a city and State or country are mentioned, whether abbreviated or not:*

Example: I will attend a seminar in Duluth, Minnesota, next week and one
in Bangor, Maine, the following week.

We will visit Washington, D.C., during our spring vacation.

She grew up in Utica, N.Y., and later returned there to live.

The second comma is omitted when a possessive ending is attached.

Example: We will visit Washington, D.C.'s monuments this weekend.

The second comma is also omitted when the abbreviation forms a compound modifier:

Example: the Fairfax, Va.-based corporation

Dashes

\$ *Use the em dash to mark a sudden break or abrupt change in thought.*

Example: *New Directions*Ca document composed by manyCwas published last fall.

\$ *Use the em dash when listing if the list is preceded by a phrase.*

Example: The list includesC

3 notepads

10 pencils

5 pens.

\$ *Use the em dash before a final clause that summarizes a series of ideas.*

Example: Freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, freedom from fearCthese are the fundamentals of moral world order.

\$ *Use the en dash to replace the word "to" or to replace a hyphen or parentheses in telephone numbers.*

Examples: See pages 5B10.

Joe's telephone number is 202B305B8617.

Exception: The meeting will last from 2 to 4 hours, or from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Period

\$ *Contrary to GPO style, OVC does not put a period after sectional divisions of cities in addresses.*

Examples: NE, NW, SE, and SW.

\$ *Following GPO style, OVC uses the Postal Service style of two-letter State and Province abbreviations.*

Examples: DC for District of Columbia, VA for Virginia.

Quotations

\$ *Quotation marks fall outside commas and periods.*

Example: After the word "treaty," insert a comma.

\$ *Do not use quotations in indirect quotations.*

Example: Tell her yes.

Semicolon

\$ *Use a semicolon to separate clauses containing commas (see the first example under colon).*

\$ *Use a semicolon to separate statements that are too closely related in meaning to be written as separate sentences. Also use a semicolon to emphasize contrast.*

Example: War is destructive; peace, constructive. (Comma replaces "is.")

\$ Do not use a semicolon where a comma will suffice.

Example: Regional offices are located in New York, NY, Chicago, IL, and Dallas, TX.

Plain English

This section of the style guide is meant to make writers aware of common errors that diminish clarity and make the reader work too hard and perhaps give up in frustration.

1. **Avoid starting sentences with conjunctions** such as "But, . . ."; "However . . .;" or empty phrases such as "There is . . ."
2. **Do not use as well as when you should use and** **B** if *and* does not sound right, start another sentence.
3. **Use active voice. Active voice places the noun doing the action ahead of the verb.**

Passive voice: The rights of victims have gone unrecognized by the criminal justice system for a long time.

Active voice: The criminal justice system did not recognize victims' rights for a long time.

Active voice is preferable because it makes clear who does what. Active voice sentence construction is more natural and increases reader comprehension. Sometimes, though, the passive voice is preferred when the doer of the action is unimportant, unknown, or the writer wishes to keep the identity of the doer vague.

Example: The Victims of Crime Act was enacted in 1984.

4. **Avoid nominalizations** (nouns that end in -tion). Try to transform nouns ending in '-tion' into active verbs.

Examples: The task force carried out an *investigation* into the commission of the crime.

IMPROVED: The task force *investigated* the crime.

The focus group has made the determination that . . .

IMPROVED: The focus group *determined* that . . .

Grant application kit utilization facilitates timely OVC award making.

IMPROVED: Using OVC's grant application kits *expedites* the award process.

5. **Simplify word choice.** *Although use and utilize mean the same thing, use is preferred. Writing is not improved and does not sound more formal, official, or important when you use more words or bigger words. A writer's primary goals are economy and clarity.*

Longer, superfluous
with the exception of

Simpler and better
except for

has as its purpose the reduction of
is a reflection of
in comparison to
in order to
in accordance with
terminate
elucidate
is included, but not limited to,
subsequent to
prior to

reduces
reflects
compared to
to
by, under
end
explain
included
after
before

6. **Avoid using clichés, jargon, and acronyms.** When writers rely on clichés, jargon, acronyms, questionable verbs, and invented words, they may sacrifice clarity in their writing and ultimately mislead their readers or even lose them completely.

\$ Examples of clichés: state of the art
first and foremost
reality check
bottom line (*Bottom line* is actually an accounting term. The careful writer should use *in the end* or *finally*.)

\$ *Jargon is word choice that is specific to a specialized group. Writers must consider their audience. If readers must flip back through the document to find the meaning of words, they will soon tire, and writers may lose their readers.*

\$ *Heavy use of acronyms are particularly annoying if the audience is unfamiliar with them. Try to keep them to a minimum.*

7. **Keep subject, verb, and object close together.** This means avoiding modifying phrases. Keep both sentences and paragraphs short, simple, and focused on the main idea. Clear writing stays on the topic idea and does not drift away.

8. **Select verbs carefully.** Verbs are often "invented," making their use questionable. Good writers choose verbs that mean exactly what is intended. To do this, be aware of a verb's origin and original meaning.

\$ The verb *to access* comes directly from the field of computer science. Originally it was expressed as *to gain access* and specifically meant to get into a program or a file.

\$ *To conference* and *conferencing* were created out of the noun *conference* (recommendation: use it only as a noun).

\$ *To impact* and *impacting* on anything means *to affect* it. *Affect* is a perfectly clear and useful verb that means the same as to have an impact on. *Impact* is a noun.

(*Solving Problems Through Technical Writing and Professional Writing*, Kennedy and

Montgomery)

Reading List

The SEC's *Plain English Handbook* suggests the following books for more information on how to write plain English. OVC does not endorse any of these books but includes them as a resource for your convenience.

Claire Kehrwald Cook, *Line by Line* (Houghton Mifflin, 1985).

Bryan A. Garner, *The Elements of Legal Style* (Oxford University Press, 1991).

Tom Goldstein and Jethro K. Lieberman, *The Lawyer's Guide to Writing Well* (University of California Press, 1989) (includes a comprehensive list of books about legal writing).

Karen Elizabeth Gordon, *The Transitive Vampire: A Handbook of Grammar for the Innocent, the Eager, and the Doomed* (Times Books, 1984).

_____, *The New Well-Tempered Sentence, A Punctuation Handbook for the Innocent, the Eager, and the Doomed* (Ticknor & Fields, 1993).

Andrea Lunsford and Robert Connors, *The Everyday Writer* (St. Martins Press, 1997).

David Mellinkoff, *Legal Writing: Sense & Nonsense* (West Publishing Company, 1982).

William Strunk, Jr. and E.B. White, *Elements of Style* (MacMillan, 3rd rev. ed., 1981).

Richard C. Wydick, *Plain English for Lawyers* (Carolina Academic Press, 2nd ed., 1985).

William Zinsser, *On Writing Well* (Harper & Row, 4th ed., 1988).